Skills Development & At Risk Populations in the 21st C.

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The Agenda

- youth unemployment in Canada: big picture, small picture
- Best practices – what we can learn others.
- How this connects with public policy
Sept 2008

- Unemployment rate: 11.1%
- Employment rate: 60.5%
- Youth with jobs: 2,685,000

July 2013

- Unemployment rate: 13.9%
- Employment rate: 54.8%
- Youth with jobs: 245,000
The percentage of discouraged workers – those who have given up looking is about 0.2%. But the percentage who are working part time *involuntarily* – in other words, they can’t find full time work – is 5.8%. These are the barebones.

- **Sept 2008**
  - 11.1% Unemployment rate: 13.9%
  - 60.5% Employment rate: 54.8%
  - 2,685,000 Youth with jobs: (245,000)

- **July 2013**
  - 13.9%
  - 54.8%
  - (245,000)
- **discouraged workers (15–24)** 0.2%.

- **working part time involuntarily** 5.8%.
  - These don’t show up in the conventional unemployment rate...because if you’re working part time, you’re considered employed.
Listen...
In Toronto...

1996, 18 per cent of university graduates worked in jobs that required only a high school education.

2006, the percentage had grown to 34%.
Rise of precarious employment
Changes in hiring practices
Before: get hired at entry level position, work your way up the career ladder
Now – Employers invest less in training.
Just in time hiring....search for just the right fit...usually from outside the organization
Experience required...
..which is what youth lack
Are youth acquiring the relevant education and skills for the labour market of the 21st century?
The Springboard Project, with participation of employers, unions, and academics...

Surveyed 601 American employers

Tried to determine the gap between the importance of a skill and a worker’s current skill level.
No Deficit in:

- Specialized IT user skills
- Management skills
- Administrative skills
- Mechanical/machine operating skills
Small Deficit in...

- (in order, smallest deficit to largest)
- Basic computer skills
- Writing skills
- Job-specific knowledge
- Job–specific technical skills
- English skills
- Reading skills
Moderate skill deficit
(rank smallest deficit to biggest)

- Quantitative reasoning
- Customer/client relationship management
- Job specific professional skills
- Critical thinking
- Teamwork
- Creative problem solving
- Oral communication skills
Severe deficit

- Adaptability
- Professionalism
- Time-management skills
- Punctuality
- Strong work ethic
- Self-motivation
- Personal accountability for work
Severe skills deficit

- Adaptability
- Professionalism
- Time-management skills
- Punctuality
- Strong work ethic
- Self-motivation
- Personal accountability for work

Q: If employers say these are their employees most severe skills deficiencies ... What’s the best way for young people to gain these skills?...and where?
German Vocational Education
Critical factors

- Highly credentialed workforce
- Employers are the gatekeepers to admissions.
Ontario Employability Survey 2011–12

- 78,500 respondents
- Grads’ employment rate: 82.6%
- Grads’ full time employment rate: 64.9%
- Grads’ full part-time employment rate in related employment (i.e.) relevant to their training....
Ontario Employability Survey 2011–12

- 78,500 respondents
- Grads’ employment rate: 82.6%
- Grads’ full time employment rate: 64.9%
- Grads full part-time employment rate in related employment (i.e.) relevant to their training: 44.9%
program for disadvantaged inner city youth 18–24; multiple risk factors; must be high school grads.

The offer: 6 months paid training, then 6 months paid internship.

Now in 12 cities, 1500 18–24 year olds a year.

Scaling up.

Earn up to 18 college credits

Get paid to learn
Life skills
Office skills
Results: 83% of grads get jobs or continue PSE after 3 months
250 corporate partners
Long term support for grads
Pathways to Education Canada

- Helping disadvantaged students graduate high school, continue their education
- Approach: after school tutoring, mentoring, parent–student advocates, $ help with bus fares and lunch money
- Measures: attendance and achievement
- Results: increase in graduation rates from 35% to 65% five years into the program
Critical factor:
- Opening up possibilities through mentoring
- Parent–student advocates
Mandate co-ops in high school,
Demand based training. Employers must be partners at the table
Financial incentives for colleges, universities to encourage more co-ops
Tie PSE funding to employment outcomes of grads